UNITY

An Organ of Reasonable Religion.

"One God, one law, one element,
And one far-off divine event
To which the whole creation moves."—*Tennyson.*

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Varieties.

Nor bounds, nor clime, nor creed Thou know'st,
Wide as man's need thy favours fall;
The white wings of the Holy Ghost
Stoop, seen or unseen, o'er the heads of all.
—Whittier.

Sir Archibald Geike, at a meeting of the British Association, claimed 100,000,000 years as the minimum time during which there has been life on the earth. This estimate agrees with that of Sir William Thomson.

For half a century I have been writing my thoughts in prose and verse; history, philosophy, drama, romance, tradition, satire, ode, and song. I have tried all. But I feel I have not said a thousandth part of what is in me. When I go down to the grave I can say, like so many others "I have finished my day's work," but I cannot say "I have finished my life." I shall begin again next morning. The tomb is not a blind alley; it is a thoroughfare. I close on the twilight to open with the dawn." —Victor Hugo.

If one goes to heaven without a heart,
God knows he leaves behind his better part.
I love my fellow-men; the worst I know
I would do good to. Will death change me so
That I shall sit among the lazy saints,
Turning a deaf ear to the sore complaints
Of souls that suffer? Why, I never yet
Left a poor dog in the strada hard beset,
Or ass o'erladen! Must I rate man less
Than dog or ass, in holy selfishness?
Methinks (Lord, pardon if the thought be sin!)
The world of pain were better, if therein
One's heart might still be human, and desires
Of natural pity drop upon its fires
Some cooling tears. —Whittier.

The New Unitarianism, I do not define theologically, but regard it as offering to its adherents the widest spiritual and intellectual freedom; and to the world, an evangelism of a depth and fulness of meaning such as to reduce the earlier content of the word to insignificance.—Rev. W. Wooding, B.A. (Congregationalist convert).

All is well, though faith and form
Be sundered in the night of fear;
Well roars the storm to those that hear
A deeper voice across the storm.
—Tennyson.

I cannot believe, and I cannot be brought to believe, that the purpose of our creation is fulfilled by our short existence here. To me the existence of another world is a necessary supplement of this to adjust its inequalities, and imbue it with moral significance.—Thurlow Weed

Ideas of Salvation.

By the Rev. H. W. Crosskey, L.L.D.

I do not think salvation is to be gained by unhealthful exaggeration of sin. I have heard men preach as though they thought the more wicked they painted themselves the better God would love them. Let us forget our sin in the beauty of the holiness of Christ. The less we brood over our guilt, the more we forget ourselves in him, the nobler we are. Salvation is sometimes painted as a spasmodic action—to be achieved in a moment. It is a life-long development. I once read a tract when I was young, which I have never forgotten. I read a tale of a man hanging by a rope over a precipice to obtain the birds' eggs from the cliffs. Standing upon a ledge, the rope had broken. It was let down again, but hung some feet from him. There he stood on the ledge, beyond him swung the rope. He had to jump to it; if he missed it he was dashed to pieces. Even like this leap, said the tract, is salvation in Christ. We have to leap to him from the terrific point on which our sins have placed us. But true salvation depends on no such wild leap. It is the gradual growth of the soul Godward. It comes quietly, simply. One of the finest things ever said of the love of man to woman was this: "To love her is a noble education." We read the man's sweet character when we hear that to love the woman he wedded was a noble education. To compare the heavenly with the earthly—to love Christ is a noble education. Salvation cannot be obtained by exaggerated self-abuse, by a spasmodic effort, but is an ever-flowing love concentrated on One who leads us to the Lord's kingdom.

An Open Letter for Open Minds.

By the Rev. H. KELSEY WHITE.

Dear Friends,—I wonder whether all of you who read these lines realise fully what is meant, and, further, what is implied, by that phrase, "the open mind." Many of you who turn to this "Open Letter," month after month, have, I imagine, long been men and women of the open mind, accustomed to face the grave problems of religion in the spirit of free and fearless enquiry, waiting in humble faith upon the gradual unfolding of God's truth, and welcoming whatsoever light should come to you to show you a wiser, a truer, a holier, and a more beautiful way.

There must, however, be others among the readers of this letter who have not yet acquired that wise habit of thought, that reverent attitude of mind, but who are, at the same time, more or less dissatisfied with the prevailing "orthodoxy" of the day. They have not, perhaps, quite abandoned the old positions—that is to say, they have not yet formally or finally renounced the creeds and dogmas in the atmosphere of which they have been brought up—but these have lost for them much of their old charm and power, and the principles and ideals of a rational religion have not taken their place in the thinker's mind and life. Well, it is to such, primarily, that in this "Open Letter" I appeal.

I would bid you, friends, in the first place, not to be dismayed at the failure of the old faith to satisfy your deepest spiritual needs. Remember, as Emerson has told us—

"When half-gods go,
The gods arrive."

And so the departure of the creed-bound dogmatism that was nurtured on a blind, unreasoning faith may make way for the entering-in of that finer temper, that spirit of wise discernment, that patient waiting upon the progressive revelation of the ages, that willingness to accept gladly the verdict of conscience and the enlightened reason, which are the characteristic marks of the "open mind." There is no real terror in that old bogie, "Doubt." Let Tennyson's well-known words, full as they are of an invigorating truth—

"There lives more faith in honest doubt,
Believe me, than in half the creeds"—

comfort and encourage you.

If your doubt be "honest" doubt—by which I mean what, I imagine, the poet meant, viz., that spirit of reverent and humble scepticism without which, as the great Darwin reminded us, there can be no progress—it must lead you eventually into paths of pleasantness and peace. And so I commend to you the religion of the open mind, a religion of deep-seated faith in the "eternal verities"—God, love, duty, the human soul—but which believes, nevertheless, that

"The Lord hath yet more light and truth
To break forth from His word."

Well, such a religion is that to which has been given the much-misunderstood and woefully misrepresented name of "Unitarianism." You will see, from what I have already said, that I myself understand the name in no narrow sectarian spirit. Unitarianism, indeed, as I consider it, is the designation rather of a movement—a characteristic habit of mind in regard to the great questions of religion—than of a church or sect. And yet it has its affirmations, its simple, satisfying creed. And it claims for those who worship by the light of its faith, and live in the spirit of its teaching, that they are in the true succession of God's most faithful witnesses. —"the seekers of the light" in all ages, who are

"One in the freedom of the truth
. . . . . .
One in the larger thought of God."

Where is More Faith?

The Rev. R. A. Armstrang said in reply to a bishop: In this clinging to certain particular views of the origin of the Bible as the very foundation of religion, he would discern, I am persuaded, a thinning and weakening of Faith indeed. Where is there more Faith—Faith after the heart of Christ—in the Ecclesiastic who thinks that if Moses didn't write the Pentateuch and David didn't write the Psalms, the basis of religion is taken away, or in the man so quick to the touch of God that he knows Him for his Father and his Friend whatever Biblical critics may discover? For my part, religion and Christianity, are to me too vital and too precious to be staked on a literary problem, even though the chances were a myriad to one that the problem turned out according to my desire. I want to be certain of religion; I will not be content with probability. I want to know that my soul is in the hands of the Heavenly Father; I cannot chance it on whether David wrote the Psalms or not. Ah, says the Bishop, but if some Hebraists doubt the authenticity of certain books, "there are many equally learned Hebraists who entirely deny the validity of modern scientific criticism, and stand firmly in the old paths." Well, suppose there are, what then? How am I, who am not a learned Hebraist, to decide between them? Even if I were one, what a terrific choice! You tell me if one set is right, Christianity is true; if the other set is right, Christianity is a dream. And you bid me accept the verdict of those who "stand in the old paths." No! I will not be bribed. I will not prostitute my intellectual judgment. I will judge as well as I can between these "equally learned" men. But, thank God, Christianity does not depend upon that. Christianity is Love to God and Love to Man; at least that is what Jesus said the whole matter came to. And I have my Heavenly Father, and my great Teacher, Jesus, and all the host of my brother men, whatever decision the Hebraists may come to at last on this little matter of who wrote the Pentateuch. And I am not going to wait for them.

Social Duty (2).

By the Rev. L. JENKINS JONES, Mayor of Woolwich.

The attitude of the Church to the social life of the people depends very much upon the moral and mental outlook of those who form the religious community. Are the members in direct touch with the people—participating in their ideals and touched by their enthusiasms? Much—very much—depends upon this. In many cases the churches themselves need saving. When this is the case it is extremely difficult to foster a spirit of social duty. Primarily, doubtless, the Church is an organ expressing spiritual conceptions. The Church differs from an ethical society in this that it emphasises the possibility and helpfulness of communion between man and God. The differentiation is absolute. Consequently the church is constantly reconciling man to the changing conceptions of God.

The standpoint from which we view God to-day differs, through the ever-increasing revelations of science, so much from the standpoint of our forefathers that it becomes a serious difficulty as to how to save the younger generation—especially the thoughtful—from agnosticism. The fact is so overwhelming to some, that it has become in their mind the exclusive purpose of the Church. Personally, I have an immense sympathy with this attitude. The frequent lapses of young people into indifference and also into agnosticism through the inability of the Orthodox Church to adapt itself to modern views creates the desire to change the church into a lecture-room. The growing mental uncertainty gives rise to a philosophical atmosphere. Still, important as this work is, the church, which deals with this exclusively, funls but a part of its duty. A great deal of the agnosticism of the day is indifference. It is emotional not intellectual. The daily struggle for life—the pitiable poverty of a large percentage of the people—the consequent anxiety which is detrimental to the full enjoyment of life —all these tell—and tell deeply and sadly—upon the religious life of the nation. The right attitude of the church to the problem of saving the people is immeasurably important and correspondingly difficult. Your opinion that the Unitarian Church can do much to show the way is one shared by all who are in living touch with the principle underlying our religious views. We are free—bound down by no formula, which hinders development. But though we may be presumably free, nevertheless may we not be in the fetters of tradition, which "weighs like a mountain on the brain of the living?" We are still too theological.

Personally I do not believe in the object lessons the church should take up. "Soup kitchens," "Insurance combinations," "Blanket clubs," etc., etc., are not, in my opinion, activities which the church should encourage within itself. Every activity of the kind which the church takes up within itself ultimately defeats the object in view. The church is in existence to inculcate and foster a spirit of brotherhood—of comradeship in society. Each member is a missionary in society of the ideals common to the community. Wearied and discouraged in living the life the member returns to the brotherhood for strength and inspiration. As the knight of old going out seeking opportunities to succour and to defend the helpless, so go the Christian man and Christian woman into the varied departments of human activities, to live and do the will of the Father. The mission of the church is to touch men's hearts and minds with such enthusiasm as light up every human activity with the spirit of the Master. The sad pity and shame are that churches profess so much and do so little to make the Gospel of peace and love and righteousness real factors of our social life.

Now, Mr. Editor, thanks for giving me an opportunity to say a few words; but I feel I have only touched a big problem, and am certain in my own mind that the greatest task before the church is one of self-preparation.

By the Way.

Owing to the serious illness of the Editor, "Unity" was in danger of not appearing at the usual time this month.

It should be noted that the articles on "Social Duty" will run through the year to a series of twelve, each by a different writer.

The article this month by the Rev. L. Jenkins Jones, Mayor of Woolwich, will be followed next month by one from Mr. Richard Robinson, of Manchester.

All the writers will be representative Unitarians, and the twelve articles, when completed, will constitute a valuable and suggestive collection of views on the social obligations of Unitarian Churches.

Ella Wheeler Wilcox says that for everyone who lifts there are twenty who lean, which means that every lifter or real worker has just twenty times more lifting than he ought to have; the weight of the twenty leaners adds that much more to the burden of the one lifter's toil.

This is true in all moral and religious activity—that the work rests on a few, many professing to help really doing nothing. Those who do the least often behave as if they did the most; they who do nothing are often loudest grumblers and fault-finders against the real workers.

A man wrote to the late Rev. Samuel Martin, Unitarian minister of Trowbridge, and addressed the envelope of the letter as follows:—

"To the Rev. Gentleman,
I don't know his name,
But he believes in one God,
The same as I do.
Trowbridge."

And the letter reached Mr. Martin.

HOME CIRCLE.

Lifters and Leaners.

There are two kinds of people on earth to-day:
Just two kinds of people—no more—I say;
Not the sinner and saint, for it is well understood
That the good are half bad, and the bad are half good.

Not the rich and the poor; for to rate a man's wealth
You must first know the state of his conscience and health.
Not the humble and proud; for in life's little span
Who puts on vain airs is not counted a man.
Not the happy and sad; for the swift flying years
Bring each man his laughter, and each man his tears.

No; the two kinds of people on earth I mean
Are the people who lift and the people who lean.
Wherever you go you will find that the masses
Are always divided into just these two classes,
And, oddly enough, you will find, too, I ween,
There is only one lifter to twenty who lean.

In which class are you? Are you easing the load
Of overtaxed lifters who toil down the road?
Or are you a leaner, who let others share
Your portion of labour and worry and care?

—Ella Wheeler Wilcox.

Misjudged.

From the German, by Rev. C. W. WENDTE.

"Children, I have explained thoroughly the Fourth Commandment. You, Dumler, tell us what is the Fourth Commandment."

"Thou shalt not bow down, nor serve——"

"Was there ever such a blunderhead! Once more the Fourth Commandment."

"Remember the Sabbath Day——"

"No, the Fourth, concerning father and mother."

"We are to have no other gods before them, nor to covet our neighbour, nor——"

"This is disgraceful! For your laziness and inattention you will stay after school an hour and study the Ten Commandments."

The culprit, a short, thickset little chap, sat down, dug his small fists into his eyes, and tears as big as peas pressed through his fingers. But as his religious teacher and pastor, I determined to call that very day on his parents, and urge them to keep him more at his books.

I entered the humble home of the Dumler family, and sought for some occupant of the house.

"Is anybody there?" The voice came from a chamber where the mother of the boy, emaciated and weak, lay in bed, weeping.

"What ails you, Mrs. Dumler; are you ill? How is it I know nothing of this?"

"Alas! your reverence, I have been confined to my bed for weeks past, so sick I feared I must die."

"Where are your daughters? Your husband?"

"The big one has gone as shop girl to the city, because her young man is there. She cares nothing for her poor, sick mother. As for Rosalie, O my God! I wanted to see you about her. It is enough to break my heart. My man—I see very little of him; he does nothing for us."

Dumler was a worthless drunkard; but these two girls were once the best pupils in my religious classes."

"But who looks after you in your sickness?"

"The little one, my Richard."

"What, the one still attending school?"

"Yes, your reverence. If it were not for him I should not be alive to-day. At four o'clock he gets up, cuts grass for the cow, milks her, fetches straw for her bed, gets breakfast for me, and when out of school at noon does the small jobs and cooks our dinner. He collects berries and resin from the trees for sale in the town, and sometimes earns twenty pennies in a day. That is about all we have to live on. In the evening he attends to everything, and gets the supper for his father and me, and then sits down to his lessons. But he seems so tired and sleepy in trying to commit a sentence or a verse, and does not succeed in remembering it. I suppose he did not know his lesson to-day, and had to stay after school. Who will cook my dinner to-day, and I so weak and faint! Just before you came I thought my end had come. I guess it was hunger. It is long to wait if he is kept at school till one o'clock."

And I had been the cause of this! I gave her some chocolate. I made a fire, and prepared hot milk soup, cut a slice of bread, and brought it to the sick woman, who protested, and was almost beside herself that I should render such services. I shook up her pillows, fetched drinking water, and aired the room. Presently, in full gallop, little Dumler came rushing into the room, his schoolbooks on his back. When he discovered me, he grew white as a sheet, and trembled all over.

"Don't be afraid, Richard; I will not hurt you. Come here, you dear, dear boy! I have done you an injustice, and I want to make amends for it."

I bent down, and pressed a kiss on the forehead of the amazed little fellow. "Come in now to your mother."

I sat down, and drew the lad to my knee. "You cannot remember the Ten Commandments?" A flood of tears was the answer.

"Never mind, my lad. Blessed are they that have the word of God and keep it. But still more blessed are they that do it. You, dear boy, are one who does it, for you are a good and dutiful son. Be faithful and good, Richard, that is the main thing; and may our heavenly Father bless you!"

I was able to aid the poor mother, so that we had her on her feet again. Little Dumler remained impervious to the Ten Commandments and the creed, but was not made to remain again after school. To-day, as porter in a large sanitarium, he sends his mother from his wages and fees a handsome sum every month. She no longer suffers from hunger or poverty. On holidays he always comes to see her, and visits me. He is my mute preacher of repentance, and my best teacher of religious instruction for the young.—(Abridged from "The Christian Register.")

MORAL: (1) Character is more than creed. (2) Danger of judging from appearances. (3) Uselessness of pressing instruction on minds of those physically or mentally unfit to receive, for educational systems are wasted on wearied or starving school children.

A Prodigal's Adventures.

George Gameson away from home had his way. And it was not a very good way, though one Sunday, "for the fun of the thing," as he said, he went to church with a boon companion, who went for no better reason.

George really listened to the sermon. But unfortunately it was not of the kind that was likely to do him much good. "Do not be puffed up as to your own deservings. You have no merit in yourselves. Human nature is hopelessly vile, and of itself can do no good. It is natural in man to do evil. There is no salvation except in the blood of the Lamb." Such were some of the sayings of the preacher.

George did not understand anything about "the blood of the Lamb," and the idea of being washed in it excited his scorn. That which he did understand was, "Human nature is vile, and of itself can do no good. It is natural in man to do evil." These words he did not forget. They fixed themselves in his mind. And he thought about them when alone, for they were constantly recurring to him. He argued with himself: Why should a man be blamed, then, if his nature is bad, and has no power to do good? Why should people be punished, if it is natural in them to do evil?

He accepted the statements, and then inferred the gross injustice of punishing men for doing what it is said to be their nature to do.

One night he had been out on a "spree," as he called it. Next morning, at daybreak, a countryman found him in a drunken sleep by the roadside, his face cut and bleeding. He was taken into the countryman's cottage and put to bed. When he had slept his intoxication off and become refreshed, he manifested some sense of shame at his condition. But his cuts were attended to. He had a good breakfast; and the man and his wife were very kind. He would have been glad to have rushed away at once from them, but somehow felt that he could not well do so without seeming utterly ungrateful. And it was Sunday morning.

The man was chatty, and asked George to have a look at his garden.

"Just look here now," said he, when they came to a corner of the ground; "here's two plants. When I put the seeds in they were both exactly alike; nobody could tell any difference. And now look at 'em. One of 'em's beautiful, perfect; but the other's a mean specimen—withered and blighted. But, mark you, both the seeds were good, and the beautiful one shows the real nature of the plant. There's a difference somehow in the soil—else they would both be good."

And meanwhile, what of his parents?

Rumours of his wild ways had reached their ears, and they knew that he must be reaping wretchedness as the result of his doings. But they did not know where he was. Brothers and sisters were angry when they heard slighting things spoken by their neighbours concerning the scapegrace. Angry they were at George, that he should cause these things to be said. They were ashamed of their brother. They felt that if he came back he did not deserve to be received. And they said as much one night, when the mother was heard to say: "We will not fasten the door. George might come——"

"What! not receive him? Why, I've been looking out many a time to see if he's coming. Your father's been down the lane to find him coming back. If you had suffered as he must have suffered, do you think we would lock the door against you?"

And George did come. Not until he had sounded the lowest depths of despair. He thought of his father and mother. He knew they would be sorrowing for him. He felt he was not worth it. And then he began to feel for them. He wept again for them. Oh, the misery he had brought upon them! "Worthless, shameful son that I am! How can I dare to look them in the face again, except to make amends?"

He came within sight of the house, and saw that the lights were out, but that there was a gleam of expiring firelight dancing fitfully across the room. He approached stealthily to try the door, but as he drew near he realised that there was someone standing outside on the doorstep. Not wishing to be seen, and knowing not who it might be, he hastily drew back and disappeared under the shadow of some trees. But scarcely had he considered himself safe from view, when a hand was placed on his shoulder, and an arm around his neck.

And what did his father say to the rest of the family while George was fast asleep. "Perhaps as God sees him he is now as good as any of us. He has suffered much, and he has been struggling hard to be better. If he struggles harder to be better than he is, than we do to become better than we are, he is not worse than we, but better in God's sight. So we must not think to look down upon him, or puff ourselves up with any sense of superiority. The only true merit in any one of us is the extent of our efforts to be better than we are. Before he went away he had got into bad company, and had his mind poisoned with bad influences. We must make

every allowance for him, and make him feel that we are all delighted to have him at home again. That kindness and loving sympathy which is merciful to the wanderer is exactly what is needed to help him to be a man again; this is the healing and restoring treatment the sick one deserves at the hands of the physician to make him strong again. Each of you must be the physician giving that mercy which is also justice."

Of George it may be truly said, he had been dead in trespasses and sins. But now he that was lost was found, and the son that was dead had become alive again. All the family at home did what they could, like ministering spirits, to put new heart into him and make him happy; and in that household it was literally true that "there was joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repented," for his parents, brothers, and sisters were the angels, and their divine helpfulness was George's safety, and the kingdom of heaven.

God's Government.

By the Rev. WILFRID HARRIS, M.A.

God's government is methodical and regular; it is on certain principles and follows certain laws. Studying the methods of God's government, Jesus notes the absence of what we call "miracles," he is impressed by what we call "the reign of law." "Do men gather grapes of thorns?" he says, "or figs of thistles? No, every tree bears its own kind of fruit." So also of the seasons, they are regular and methodical; when the fig tree and all the trees put forth and bud, you know that summer is nigh. Similarly of the weather, it is not capricious. When the sky is red and lowering ye say, There will be foul weather to-day. Or, again, It will be fair weather, when in the evening the heaven is red.

The government of God is methodical. When we understand the methods of God, we can prophecy the future. These things are signs. Jesus mentions these signs of the regular and methodical government of God in distinct contrast to the desire for those other signs called "miracles." It was when someone had asked him for a sign from heaven that he mentioned these signs of the weather seen in heaven. These are signs. As to any other sort of signs he says, "A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh a sign." God gives us signs, but they are what we should call the signs of the man of science, signs understood by those who study God's method of government.

Again, we see the reign of law, as in Nature so in man. Like trees and their fruits, so are men. The good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth good things, and the evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth evil things. You cannot gather grapes of thorns, nor figs of thistles. This is the reign of spiritual law in the spiritual world.

Now, these things which we call the reign of law, Jesus calls "the reign of God," or the government or "kingdom of God." The word translated "kingdom" (the Bible was not written in English, you know) may also be translated "the government," or—the reign of God. So now we see Jesus' thoughts about "the reign of God" in Nature and in man. How God reigns, how God governs—this is the subject of all his parables: The reign of God in the mustard seed and in man; the reign of God in the cornfield, and in human life; the reign of God in the seasons and in the weather—so in religious seasons, periods of religious awakening or depression.

I know no religious teacher so completely or so nearly in harmony with modern scientific thought as Jesus of Nazareth. To him the whole world, both of Nature and of man, is under the reign of law, and as such, God being the Lawgiver, the whole world is "my Father's house." "In my Father's house are many mansions," he says in one place, anticipating his death, and his departure out of this particular world into some other. Whatever part of the universe he was in he felt he was still in God's keeping.

Take that saying of his childhood, so rarely understood, when his father and mother had lost sight of him—Oh! where was he? Had he died, met with some dreadful accident? And Jesus was amazed. "Why so terrified? Why so anxious? I should have been somewhere in God's world still. Didn't you know, wherever I am, I must be in my Father's house somewhere? In my Father's house are many mansions; wist ye not that I must be in my Father's house? There is nowhere else."

Thus then, briefly, the God whom Jesus worshipped was the God of the universe, of this world and all other worlds, of this side the grave and the other side of it—the God in whose House are many mansions. Wherever he is, he is somewhere in the Father's House. Wist ye not I MUST be in my Father's House?

The Government of God is subtle and secret—slow and sure, and inevitable; the government of God is like a seed growing secretly. As in the world of nature, so in the world of man, God works in secret. He works out of your sight.

Every good thought, like a good seed is growing secretly, silently grows your regard, your faith, your love, your joy, your religion, your oneness with God. See, God's government is within you! Look, and behold your God.

"The Government of God," that is the text of all Jesus' sermons. God governs all things, all the world, all the universe, all nature, all creatures great and small, and all men; each individual life, each human soul; not one can escape the government of God. Say not, Lo here, nor Lo there, for Lo, the government of God is in the midst of you.

UNITY.

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A Roman Catholic Convert.

The late Rev. Rodolph Suffield, once a Roman Catholic priest, said of himself, on becoming a Unitarian:—

After long and deep thought, study, prayer, and counsel, I decided that it would be impossible for me honestly to continue to act as a priest. The infallibility of the Pope, and, of the Scriptures, alike, I question, and the dogmas resting solely on either of those authorities, I am not able on that account to admit.

It is my desire to unite with others, and to assist them in the worship of God, and in the practice of the two-fold precepts of charity, unfettered by adhesion on either side, to anything, beyond those great fundamental principles as presented to us by Jesus Christ.

Having understood that those who are commonly called Unitarians, Free Christians, or Christian Theists, thus agree in the liberty inspired by self-diffidence, humility, and charity, to carry on the worship of God, without sectarian requirements or sectarian opposition; but they possess a simple but not vulgar worship, a high standard of virtue, intelligence, and integrity; and these after the Christian type, moulded by the Christian traditions, and edified by the sacred Scriptures; holding the spirit taught by Jesus Christ, and the great thoughts by virtue of which he built up the ruins of the moral world; and yet not enforcing the reception of complicated dogmas as a necessity, or accounting their rejection a crime; a communion of Christian worshippers, bound loosely together, and yet by the force of great principles enabled quietly to maintain their position, to exercise an influence elevating and not unimportant, and to present religion under an aspect which thoughtful men can accept without latent scepticism, and earnest men without the aberrations of superstition, or the abjectness of mental servitude to another—such approved itself to my judgment, and commended itself to my sympathy.

Death of the Rev. R. A. Armstrong, B.A.

(Jan. 4th).

We all feel that the passing away of the Rev. Richard Acland Armstrong, minister of Hope Street, Church, Liverpool, is a great loss to us Unitarians. He himself was a militant Unitarian, ever fighting for the Truth in passionate love for Humanity. He was a great teacher of reasonable ideas. He was clear in thought and expression, strictly logical in his conclusions, intense and strenuous in his delivery. Sincerity was a striking characteristic of the man. Under an exterior of reserve he had a wealth of sympathy and delicacy of feeling for everything human. In private intercourse he helped others by making them feel themselves on equality with him.

He was a brave man. As a young minister in Ireland, he stood up and debated in opposition to ten orthodox clergymen against their views of the Bible, in a crowded public hall until two o'clock in the morning. At Nottingham, a few years later, he debated two nights against Charles Bradlaugh in favour of the reasonableness of the worship of God. In Liverpool afterwards he made laborious investigations by personal visitations of the worst districts for intemperance and immorality, and startled the City by the consequent revelations in a pamphlet called "The Deadly Shame of Liverpool," with the result that most sweeping reforms were made throughout the city in restricting the drink shops as to their facility for vice and immorality, and closing large numbers of them altogether.

He wrote books and pamphlets in defence of religion, and of Unitarianism, of a most helpful kind, and his special courses of lectures on religious problems were illuminating. We give thanks for Richard Armstrong. He was a great intellectual force, but still greater as a moral and spiritual force. He was a good man. A purer, whiter soul, could rarely ever be met with in earthly form. In that respect he ranks well with such as Emerson, Channing, and Martineau, whose cleanness of soul exalted and sanctified all they did. He loved man, and he loved God. The white flower of the good life is his. Where he now lives there will be the same kinds of people, and much of the same kind of work to do. Richard Armstrong's life is not cut short, but it is simply transferred to other scenes and to other people. His work will be needed there. His powers at their ripest when he left this sphere will do even greater things where he is. There is no death. The failure of the fleshly tenement becomes the gateway of Life—more life.

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A large part of what are sometimes called Christian doctrines, and many usages which have prevailed and continue to prevail in the Christian Church, are in reality Greek theories and Greek usages changed in form and colour by the influence of primitive Christianity, but in their essence Greek still.

It is possible to urge that Christianity—which grew on a soil whereon metaphysics never throve—which won its first victories over the world by the simple moral force of the Sermon on the Mount, and by the sublime influence of the life and death of Jesus Christ, may throw off Hellenism and be none the loser, but rather stand out again before the world in the uncoloured majesty of the Gospels. It is possible to urge that what was absent from the early form cannot be essential, and that the Sermon on the Mount is not an outlying part of the Gospel, but its sum.

It seems clear that much of the Greek element may be abandoned.

Though you may believe that I am but a dreamer of dreams, I seem to see, though it be on the far horizon—the horizon beyond the fields which either we or our children will tread—a Christianity which is not new but old, which is not old but new, a Christianity in which the moral and spiritual elements will again hold their place, in which men will be bound together by the bond of mutual service, which is the bond of the sons of God, a Christianity which will actually realise the brotherhood of men, the ideal of its first communities.—Edwin Hatch.

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